

Colleen Urquhart-Fillner
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November 20, 2010

Candidate Selection Committee
c/o Legislative Services Division
PO Box 201706
Helena MT 59620-1706

Dear Speaker Bergren, President Story, Majority Leader Sales, and Minority Leader Williams:

I am writing to submit my application for your consideration for the position of Commissioner of Political Practices.

I have attached a copy of my resume for your review, but allow me to offer some of the highlights as pertains to this appointment:

- I have an undergraduate degree in Business Administration from Carroll College in Helena and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Montana.
- From 1989 to 1993 I worked in technical positions relating to accounting and personnel administration within Montana State government where my positions were required to ensure compliance with various agency, state and federal regulations. This compliance experience is very similar to the responsibilities of the Commissioner who is charged with ensuring compliance by various campaigns, lobbies, and individuals to Montana's campaign and political practices regulations.
- As a member of Governor Racicot's staff, I gained extensive direct experience in dealing with political practices regulations and compliance with those regulations from the aspect of a lobbying agency. From 1993 to 2000 one of my responsibilities within the Governor's Office was to oversee staff compliance and reporting of political practices activities. This time period included the 1993 Special Session, the 1995 Legislative Session, the 1997 Legislative Session, the 1999 Legislative Session and the 2000 Special Session. In addition I was responsible for the handing all Legislative bills and vetoes by the Governor's Office and ensuring compliance with legislative rules and state laws by the Governor's Office in our handling of these bills.

- As an Administrative Assistant for Quality Images, an association management firm, I assisted in tracking lobbying activities for multiple professional associations and compiling that data into political practice reports for submittal to the Office of the Commissioner of Political Practices.
- Finally, I also have direct campaign related experience in understanding and complying with political practices laws and regulations. During 1999 to 2000 I ran the Russ Fillner for Secretary of State campaign in the 2000 primary elections and assisted in running Karla Gray's campaign for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court during the 2000 general election. These campaigns involved extensive monitoring, compliance and reporting of campaign related activities and expenditures for reporting to the Office of the Commissioner of Political Practices.

I believe that I possess the necessary qualifications to perform this job to the highest standard, representing the best interests of Montanans and ensuring the compliance with the Montana Constitution and the laws set forth by the Montana Legislature. I appreciate your consideration of my application for this very important position.

Sincerely,

Colleen Urquhart-Fillner

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Colleen Urquhart-Fillner, Consultant/Freelance Writer, Helena MT

Executive Consultant, Owner/manager, March 2001 - Present

I offer clients a broad range of consulting services including:

- Professional management services for professional associations and service groups including oversight of day-to-day business operations, membership recruitment and retention, public relations, bookkeeping and accounting services, advocacy of organization goals and objectives.
- Governmental consulting and assistance including constituent advocacy, dispute resolution and assistance in grant writing.
- Freelance writing including newsletters, articles, editorials, professional correspondence, and fiction (both short story and novel).

Karla Gray for Chief Justice, Helena MT

Campaign Coordinator, July – November 2000

Developed and provided oversight of all grassroots efforts to promote the candidacy and election of Chief Justice Karla Gray including:

- Public relations and media opportunities for the candidate.
- Campaign fundraising strategies.
- Recruitment and supervision of a team of hundreds of campaign volunteers statewide.
- Political Practices reporting

Russ Fillner for Secretary of State, Helena MT

Campaign Manager / Campaign Treasurer, Full time April – June 2000, Part time February 1999 – April 2000

Same duties as above but also including:

- Development of campaign budget and fundraising targets.
- Design of campaign media strategies and oversight of campaign advertising purchases.
- Research and development of candidate briefing materials and speeches.
- Represented the candidate at numerous events around the state
- Political practices campaign reporting.

Office of the Governor, Helena MT

Policy Advisor for Agriculture and Transportation, August 1999 – April 2000

Executive Assistant, November 1993 – August 1999

Provided professional staff support to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Chief of Staff in areas of policy research, intra- and inter-governmental relations, and constituent affairs including:

- Advised the Governor and top administration officials on agriculture and transportation issues.
- Developed and implemented special projects for the Governor.
- Provided oversight of legislative monitoring systems and legislative operations (non-lobbying).
- Ensured staff compliance with political practices lobbying reporting and regulations.
- Acted as liaison for the Governor's office to regional and national governor's associations and other governmental associations and lobbying organizations.
- Established and maintained strong working relations with local, state, and federal officials and their staffs; including members of Congress, other governor's offices, and Canadian provincial officials to facilitate the mutually beneficial exchange of information and assistance.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (continued)

Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Helena, MT

Personnel Technician/Training Officer, October 1991-October 1993

Provided oversight of department training program including

- logistical development of department training opportunities,
- contracted with outside training providers to meet department training needs
- Developed and presented training courses providing basic departmental information and procedures training courses
- Assisted in the development and presentation of total quality management and continuous improvement training courses for the department's Quality Works initiative.
- Redesigned and maintained a computer database for tracking department training for all employees.

Montana Department of Administration, Helena, MT

Accounting Technician, October 1989 - October 1991

Handled accounts receivable, order management, and inventory adjustments for State Central Stores program and for State and Federal Surplus Property Programs.

Quality Images, Helena, MT

Administrative Assistant, May 1989 - October 1989 (Temporary)

Provided administrative support and accounting/bookkeeping services for an association management/lobbying firm. These duties included tracking and compilation of political lobbying activities for state and federal regulatory agencies.

Gold Rush Bridal, Helena, MT

Assistant Manager, June 1988 - May 1989 (full time) June 1989 - January 1990 (part time)

Provided customer assistance, consultation services, retail sales and rentals, purchasing, inventory management, and supervision of part time staff for exclusive bridal shop.

SPECIAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Technological Competency:

- Information system needs analyst/user analyst for computer projects in the Governor's office; acting as a liaison between computer programmers/technicians and non-technological staff.
- Served on the State Information Services taskforce charged with developing the LAWS legislative tracking system for the State of Montana.
- Software applications: Windows, WordPerfect, Lotus, Lotus Approach, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, RBase, Zip-mail, and the Internet.

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.)
1992-1996, Degree awarded December 1996

University of Montana
Missoula, Montana

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Business Administration
1986-1988, Degree awarded August 1988

Carroll College
Helena, Montana

Coursework in Public Relations and Computer Science
1979-1984, no degree received

Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana

Academic Diploma
1977-1979, Degree awarded June 1979

Great Falls High School
Great Falls, Montana

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Work related:

- Chair, Montana Medal of Valor Committee, 1993 – 2000
- Chair, Capitol Safety Coordinators Task Force, 1996 – 2000
- Member, State Safety Coordinators Task Force, 1994 – 2000
- Member, Capitol Security Task Force, 1994 – 2000
- Member, State Recycling Coordinators Task Force, 1995 – 2000
- Governor's representative on the Montana Tourism and Recreation Initiative, 1997-1999
- Governor's representative on the Montana Heritage Project, 1997-1999
- Chair of annual Governor's Office Picnic, 1994 – 1995
- Recipient of Montana Department of Labor and Industry Employee Recognition Award, 1993
- Member, Department of Labor and Industry Commissioner's Task Force to Review Department Information Technology Services, 1993

Community Service:

- State Membership Information Director, statewide women's organization, 1995 - 2002
- Member, Gates of the Mountains Boat Club 1991—present
- Member, American Diabetes Association Helena Walktoberfest Committee, 1998 & 1999
- Tree Designer and Volunteer, Intermountain Children's' Home Festival of Trees, 1997 and 1998
- Pacific Northwest Chair for Veterans' Services, National Society Daughters of the American Colonists, 1994 –1998
- State Regent, Montana Daughters of the American Colonists, 1987 - 1995 (3 terms)
- Pacific Northwest Chair of Golden Acorns, National Society Daughters of the American Colonists, 1988-1994
- Volunteer, Montana Centennial Celebration Committee, 1988
- Volunteer, Saint Peter's Hospital, 1985 – 1987

REFERENCES

Professional:

Former Governor Marc Racicot
American Insurance Association
1130 Connecticut Ave, NW
Ste. 1000
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 828-7100

Judy Browning
Former Chief of Staff to the Governor
101 W. Oro Valley Drive
Tucson AZ 85737
Phone: (520) 531-0822

Former Chief Justice Karla Gray
1 S. Benton Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
Phone: (406) 449-6929

Lydia Conrad
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW
Room 3318
Washington, DC 20590
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Personal/Professional:

Jerry Weissman
Greenbriar Drive
Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: (406) 452-3333

Anita Varone
Former Lewis and Clark County Commissioner/Chairwoman
646 Tamarack
Helena, MT 59601
Phone: (406) 442-2072

Myrna Omholt-Mason
4255 Helberg Lane
Helena, MT 59602
Phone: (406) 227-0180

Fox, Susan

From: Colleen Fillner [cuf@mt.net]
Sent: Monday, December 06, 2010 7:44 AM
To: Fox, Susan
Subject: Re: Questions for candidates for Commissioner of Political Practices (COPP)

Dear Susan:

Below please find my responses to the questions you sent on behalf of the selection committee. I will be in Billings this week with my mother who is in rehab following complications from her heart surgery in early October. If necessary I can be reached via my cell phone 406-431-3894. I can return to Helena if my presence in person is needed. Mother is scheduled for a medical procedure on Thursday for which I should be present, so if that day can be avoided it would be helpful. However, if my presence is necessary on that day I can make arrangements with the doctors to accommodate the needs of the selection committee.

I appreciate your efforts on behalf of the committee and on behalf of the candidates for this important position.

Colleen Urquhart-Fillner

Responses to Supplemental Questions:

1. Are you familiar with restrictions Montana law imposes upon the activities of an individual holding the office of COPP?

I am familiar with the requirements and restrictions placed on the incumbent in this position by Montana law and do not believe I would have any difficulty in complying with those requirements and restrictions.

2. What is your legal writing experience?

As a member of Governor Racicot's staff I have had extensive professional writing experience in articulating complex policy and legal issues, including discussions on the application of the death penalty, enforcement of Montana child custody laws, environmental policy and law and other complex legal issues.

3. Have you ever been party to a complaint filed with the COPP?

Not to my knowledge.

4. What is your current or past involvement with either the campaign of a candidate or a ballot initiative?

As indicated on my resume, in 2000 I worked on the following campaigns: Russell Fillner for Secretary of State on the Republican ballot in the primary election, and for Karla Gray for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as a non-partisan candidate in the general election. These are the only two candidates with whom I've been involved on a level that could have any impact on my ability to impartially perform the functions of the position. Mr. Fillner does not hold an elected office and is no longer involved in politics except as his job requires that he provide the Legislature with informational testimony on issues involving the

University of Montana Helena College of Technology. Justice Gray has since retired and to my knowledge has no intention of seeking another office.

5. Have you been affiliated with a political party or political action committee? If yes, how will this affiliation affect your ability to render impartial decisions on complaints filed against candidates, PACs, and ballot initiatives?

I served as the Finance Chair for the Lewis and Clark Republican Central Committee. At the end of my term in 2004 I did not seek re-election to the post and have since withdrawn from partisan politics. At this point in time I consider myself to be a moderate Independent and am not actively involved in politics and do not typically support candidates from either party. Most of the people I knew "back in the day" are no longer active in politics and it's unlikely that I would face a situation where I'm called upon to render a decision involving someone I know well enough to have any influence on my opinion of them or their actions. Even if that were to happen, I believe that I would be able to render decisions without fear or favor. I do not believe that my past involvement with partisan politics would affect my ability to render impartial decisions on any candidate, PAC, or ballot initiative.

6. What is your opinion of the current candidate contribution limits?

I believe that the issue of candidate contribution limits is one to be properly addressed by the Legislature or by the people of Montana and should be enforced by the Commissioner of Political Practices in accordance with the law. The Commissioner of Political Practices, as the party responsible for enforcing and adjudicating such laws, should take a similar stance as a member of the judiciary and remain a neutral party in the process of shaping those laws. The incumbent of that office should be available to provide input or testimony on this subject on an informational basis only. In my opinion the Commissioner of Political Practices is not an activist position and should not seek to influence the law, but rather to enforce it as determined by the Legislature and by the people of Montana.

7. Have you or a family member been involved in the legislative process as a lobbyist?

Not to my knowledge. As the Assistant Dean for Fiscal and Plant for the University of Montana Helena College of Technology my husband is sometimes required to be available to legislators to provide informational testimony only. He does not engage in any lobbying activities during this process, only providing information regarding the UMH.

8. In your opinion, do further regulations or restrictions need to be placed on lobbyists' activities?

As explained above, I believe that the Commissioner of Political Practices should remain a neutral party in shaping the laws surrounding the issues overseen by that office. The role of the Commissioner of Political Practices should be enforcing those laws established by the Legislature and by the people of Montana.